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SENATE  
PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY  
Exhibit No. 2  
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Bill No. SB 276

## Senate Public Health Committee February 11, 2015

### SENATE BILL 276 Establishing a Directory of Providers of Certain Personal Assistance Services

For the record I am Rose Hughes of Helena, Executive Director of the Montana Health Care Association (MHCA). MHCA represents long term care facilities and agencies, including home care agencies which provide personal assistance services.

We support SB 276 because it is something consumers of personal assistance services want and need.

Thousands of people with disabilities and the elderly use this program to help them live at home. When people need these services it is normally because they find themselves in a crisis situation. It is difficult to make good decisions under these circumstances and the fact that comparative information about the many agencies who offer these services isn't readily available exacerbates the problem.

SB 276 simply requires DPHHS to maintain an electronic directory of personal assistance providers which contains basic contact information. In addition, the department will encourage providers to supply additional information voluntarily. The additional information will include things like how long they have been in business, whether they do background checks on their workers, whether their workers are bonded, the number of workers available to serve clients and the longevity of workers.

Personal assistance services are all about the quality of the care givers. When care givers are happy and treated well they are likely to do a good job. Having basic information about the numbers of available staff, longevity, benefits, etc., can be an indicator of the quality of the agency and the services. Knowing whether people who come into your home to provide services have had a background check and whether they are bonded is also important information.

The home care agencies we represent are willing to provide aggregate information about their agency and their care givers - to help consumers make good choices in difficult times.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I would be happy to answer questions or provide additional information.

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*MHCA...providing leadership and empowerment within the long term care continuum  
through education, advocacy, information and support to our members.*